

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies

C2P2 Guiding Principles | C2P2 Design Guidelines | C2P2 Land Use Policies

First Edition

Columbus Planning Division

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1 - Introduction

Introduction

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) will help guide the next generation of development in the city of Columbus. As Central Ohio is projected to grow by up to 1 million people by 2050 (source: insight2050), Columbus Citywide Planning Policies are designed to guide and focus our share of this growth in a manner that supports the city’s economic competitiveness, benefits the environment, and improves resident’s quality of life. The C2P2 Guiding Principles (Healthy and Complete Communities, Guided Growth and Sustainable Development, and Design and Character) serve as a basis for key development strategies implemented through the use of C2P2 Land Use Policies and Design Guidelines.

About C2P2

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies serve as the basis for land use planning within the city of Columbus and specifically address land use and design in development review. The goal is to adopt C2P2 in every area of the city in order to establish consistent, predictable policies citywide that are updated regularly. C2P2 includes four primary elements: Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines, Land Use Policies, and Land Use Plans. Together, the four elements are used to guide community and city review of rezoning and variance applications. Table 1.1 (below) provides a description of each element.

C2P2 Element	Description	Application
Guiding Principles	“Big picture” ideas that express how the city should develop and serve as the foundation for the Land Use Policies and Design Guidelines.	Citywide
Design Guidelines	Recommendations for the placement and design of development (what development should “look” like), including topics such as connectivity, setbacks, parking, open space, and natural resources.	Citywide
Land Use Policies	Detailed policies (text) designed to be used with the Recommended Land Use Map in an area’s Land Use Plan. These policies provide flexible guidance on key land use issues and scenarios.	Citywide
Land Use Plan(s)	Developed for each area individually. It includes a Recommended Land Use Map and Area Specific Policies, and provides recommendations to address special circumstances in each area.	Area Specific

Table 1.1 – Four primary elements of Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2)

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies are:

- **Adopted city policy.**
- **Used to guide community and city review of future rezoning and variance requests.**
- **NOT...**City code or law, and do not change existing zoning or zoning overlays already in place.
- **NOT...**used to address operational issues or issues unrelated to the built and natural environment, such as healthcare, code enforcement, and public safety. These items are outside the scope of the planning process.
- **NOT...**used to directly plan for traffic, congestion, or storm-water issues. (Instead, these matters are addressed as part of the development review process managed by the Department of Building and Zoning Services.)

Benefits of C2P2

C2P2 will provide the following benefits to the community:

- Provide consistent, predictable, and up-to-date citywide policies.
- Institute best practices developed by the City of Columbus over 20+ years.
- Provide a clear response to insight2050 and projected growth patterns for Central Ohio.
- Offer a consistent neighborhood planning process.
- Result in clear, predictable, and consistent responses to development proposals.
- Support housing and job options for a growing and diverse population.
- Encourage development patterns that support transportation options.
- Serve as a basis to consider code updates to facilitate community development.
- Provide for regular updates to ensure planning policies are current citywide.

C2P2 and the Community

Adoption of C2P2 in each area of Columbus provides communities with the most up-to-date, best practices for land use and design. Unlike a static plan, updates to the Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines and Land Use Policies (when adopted by City Council) will apply automatically to every area where C2P2 has been previously adopted.

Community engagement is a key component of C2P2, and input will be sought at both a citywide and neighborhood level based on the need and type of update proposed. Updates to the Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines and Land Use Policies will include engagement at a citywide level, while Land Use Plans will be developed by city staff in partnership with area leadership. Land Use Plans are area specific and include a Recommended Land Use Map and Area Specific Policies. (See Table 1.2, page 7)

Going Forward – C2P2 Timeline and Implementation

C2P2 may be adopted by area in a two-step process. Step 1, early adoption, provides neighborhoods the opportunity to benefit from C2P2 Design Guidelines earlier than their scheduled Land Use Plan update. Step 2 includes complete adoption of C2P2 by area, including updated Land Use Plans by area. In Step 2, the city will work directly with each area to develop Land Use Plans, including a Recommended Land Use Map and Area Specific Policies (See Table 1.2).

Implementation of C2P2 as citywide policy will occur over a several year process. Three phases of public engagement are planned over the next several years. Phase I (2018) includes educating the community on C2P2 and providing areas the opportunity for early adoption of C2P2 Design Guidelines. Phase II (2019) includes citywide public engagement on C2P2 Land Use Policies and Design Guidelines and will result in the first citywide update to C2P2. Phase III (2020) includes area focused public engagement and complete adoption of C2P2 by area, including Land Use Plans by area (See Table 1.3).

Adoption Stage	C2P2 Element	Engagement/ Application	Description
Step 1 - Early Adoption	Guiding Principles	Citywide	The foundation for the guidelines, policies and plans.
	Design Guidelines	Citywide	Design recommendations for proposed development.
Step 2 - Complete Adoption	Land Use Policies	Citywide	Policy text used with Land Use Plans to provide guidance on land use.
	Land Use Plan	Area Specific	Recommended Land Use Map and Area Specific Policies.

Table 1.2 - Adoption steps and public engagement type for each element of C2P2

Phase	Year	Engagement	Goals
Phase I	2018	Educate community on C2P2 policies and timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Step 1 - Early Adoption by area – Establish C2P2 as a citywide basis for land use planning
Phase II	2019	Engage stakeholders citywide on land use policies and design guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – First update to C2P2 Design Guidelines and Land Use Policies
Phase III	2020 (ongoing)	Engage stakeholders by area to develop Land Use Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Step 2 - Complete adoption of C2P2 by area, including Land Use Plans

Table 1.3 - Phases of public engagement for C2P2

Using Columbus Citywide Planning Policies: Basic Steps

Follow five basic steps to review development proposals using the Columbus Citywide Planning Policies:

Begin with an area's C2P2 Land Use Plan (Step 1-3)*:

**When C2P2 Design Guidelines have been adopted for an area (early adoption), but a C2P2 Land Use Plan is not in place, proceed to Step 5. In this case, development proposals will be reviewed for consistency with C2P2 Design Guidelines and an area's previously adopted Area or Neighborhood Plan.*

Step 1: Identify the location of the development on the Recommended Land Use Map located within the C2P2 Land Use Plan. Refer to the map legend to determine the recommended land use for the site location. Online mapping applications are also available at:
www.columbus.gov/planning

Step 2: Refer to the Land Use Classification Table for a general description of the land use recommendation for the site.

Step 3: Review the Area Specific Policies located within the C2P2 Land Use Plan to determine if any apply to the site.

Then proceed to C2P2 Land Use Policies (Step 4):

Step 4: Review the C2P2 Land Use Policies (page 28-40) that corresponds with the land use recommendation for more specific policy information.

Then proceed to C2P2 Design Guidelines (Step 5):

Step 5: Refer to any relevant C2P2 Design Guidelines (page 15-27) for the proposed development.

Background

1993 Columbus Comprehensive Plan

In 1993, Columbus City Council adopted the City's first Comprehensive Plan in over 80 years. The effort was, in part, a response to development pressures and service challenges that had emerged during the prior decade. The plan established a framework for addressing planning and development, capital improvements, and community facility issues on a citywide basis.

Implementation of the plan led to a number of key initiatives that remain in place today, including:

- Parkland Dedication Ordinance
- Traffic Standards Code
- Requirements for sidewalks, street trees, and street lights
- Traditional Neighborhood Development Code
- Increased emphasis on riparian corridors
- Environmental Conservation District – 1st City policy to protect the Darby

Area Planning Prior to C2P2

After the 1993 Comprehensive Plan was adopted, the city focused on smaller scale neighborhood and area plans to address land use, urban design, and related issues. Over the past 25 years, area planning has evolved to be better suited to supporting development review, which is the primary use of the plans. Area plans no longer address operational issues such as refuse collection, safety services, and code enforcement. While important to the community, these issues are difficult to implement through an area plan and are better addressed through specific initiatives. Area plan recommendations instead focus on land use and urban design as a way to directly impact development review in the city. Parcel level land use recommendations were also introduced through the use of geographic information systems (GIS).

Columbus currently has over 40 neighborhood and area plans, covering over 90% of the city's corporate boundary. The update schedule for area plans is influenced by a number of factors, including development activity, broader city priorities, and the age or relevance of the current document. However, due to the amount of time required to update each area plan, the City has been unable to keep all plans updated within the preferred 10 year timeframe. Outdated plans have resulted in a number of challenges for the city and community, including: significant differences between current and older plan policies, inconsistent policies for property owners and developers working on projects in multiple areas, planning area boundaries that are inconsistent with newly formed area commission boundaries, and an absence of a broader policy framework for citywide development issues.

C2P2: a Response to Area Plan Challenges

The Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) were created as a response to the challenges encountered through the past area planning process. C2P2 will provide communities with the most up-to-date, best practices for land use and design and will be updated regularly. As adopted citywide policy, updates to the C2P2 Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines and Land Use Policies will apply automatically to every area where C2P2 has been previously adopted. This method creates a consistent neighborhood planning process that allows all areas within the city to benefit from the most up-to-date policies for land use and design review.

C2P2 is based on best practices developed with community stakeholders over the past 20+ years of area planning. The document is a reflection of the city's most current area plan best practices, land use policies, and design guidelines. Implementing citywide policies allows for clear, predictable, and consistent responses to development proposals throughout the city and also directly responds to findings in insight2050, a public/private initiative in Central Ohio to plan for growth over the next 30+ years (www.getinsight2050.org).

C2P2 includes Land Use Plans developed specifically for each area in Columbus. Land Use Plans (previously titled Neighborhood or Area Plans) are developed by city staff in partnership with community members to provide specific land use recommendations for an area. Land Use Plans focus on Area Specific Policies and a Recommended Land Use Map. Rezoning or variance applications are reviewed by city staff and the community for consistency with Columbus Citywide Planning Policies, including the Design Guidelines, Land Use Policies, and Land Use Plan. For more information, see Using *Columbus Citywide Planning Policies: Basic Steps* on page 8.

Additional Planning in Central Ohio

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies address land use and design for development proposals within the city of Columbus. C2P2 is specific in subject matter in order to provide focused guidance for development review. It is designed to complement other planning efforts related to city infrastructure, recreation and parks, transportation and more. Examples of additional planning efforts in the City of Columbus and Central Ohio include insight2050 (Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission), Connect Columbus (City of Columbus), NextGen (Central Ohio Transit Authority), and AgeFriendly Columbus (The Ohio State University College of Social Work).



2 – Guiding Principles

Introduction - Guiding Principles

C2P2 Guiding Principles are “big picture” ideas that provide a vision for how the city should develop and describe citywide priorities relative to land use and development. The three Guiding Principles serve as the foundation for the Land Use Policies and Design Guidelines, and each are comprised of a vision statement and principle statements. Each principle statement is aligned with C2P2 Land Use Policies (LU) and/or C2P2 Design Guidelines (DG), as indicated by an abbreviation at the end of each statement (pages 12 – 14).

Guiding Principle #1

Healthy and Complete Communities

Vision Statement: Neighborhoods should have a mix of uses that provide a range of housing types, retail and community services, and employment opportunities. Neighborhoods should also be served by multiple transportation options.

Principle Statements:

- Mixed-use and highest density residential development is encouraged within established commercial centers and along primary corridors with access to transit. (LU)
- Retail development should be strategically located within commercial nodes and mixed use areas. (LU)
- Protection and expansion of employment oriented land uses, including office and manufacturing, is a priority. (LU)
- Local agriculture and supportive uses are encouraged. (LU)
- Access to parks, open space and recreational opportunities should be provided for all neighborhoods. (DG)
- Connectivity within and among developments should be provided through streets, sidewalks, bikeways and multi-use trail networks. (DG)

Guiding Principle #2

Guided Growth and Sustainable Development

Vision Statement: As Columbus' population grows over the next few decades, how and where development occurs will impact the quality of life in our city. Guided and planned development will conserve both economic and environmental resources, provide access to natural areas and open space, and encourage investment in neighborhoods.

Principle Statements:

- Priority should be placed on revitalization of Columbus' older neighborhoods through infill development in order to provide economic opportunities and an improved quality of life for all residents. (LU)
- Development that utilizes existing infrastructure within urban and established suburban neighborhoods is a priority. (LU)
- Natural resources, including rivers and wetlands, should be protected and preserved in new development. (DG)
- Site design should incorporate and highlight natural features and open space. (DG)
- Parking should be balanced with the goals of reducing development's impact on the natural environment, creating walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, and encouraging the use of transit. (DG)
- Green building techniques, conservation development, and alternative energy sources are encouraged. (DG)

Guiding Principle #3

Design and Character

Vision Statement: Columbus' diverse neighborhood character adds to the vibrancy of the city. High quality development can enhance the character of neighborhoods, create a sense of place for residents, and attract investment. Design guidelines provide a basis for thoughtful development that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Principle Statements:

- Downtown Columbus's role as the cultural, political, and economic heart of the region should be recognized and strengthened. (LU)(DG)
- Established neighborhoods should be enhanced with high quality and appropriate infill development guided by land use and design recommendations. (LU)(DG)
- Higher intensity uses should incorporate design elements to minimize impacts on adjacent lower intensity uses. (DG)
- Building placement and design should contribute to a pedestrian-friendly streetscape. (DG)
- Historic buildings and homes that contribute to the character of existing neighborhoods should be considered for preservation or incorporation into development. (DG)



3 – Design Guidelines

Introduction - Design Guidelines

The C2P2 Design Guidelines are recommendations for the placement and design of development (what development should look like) including topics such as connectivity, setbacks, parking, open space, and natural resources. The guidelines include specific standards for design, but are intended to allow for flexibility in application. Rezoning or variance applications are reviewed for consistency with Columbus Citywide Planning Policies, including the Design Guidelines, Land Use Policies, and Land Use Plan (See also *About C2P2*, p. 4-7).

It is important to note that the C2P2 Design Guidelines are city policy and do not replace the zoning code and its legislatively adopted standards. The guidelines do not replace regulations for traffic management, storm water and sewer management, or parkland dedication. These regulations are managed by the Department of Public Service, Department of Public Utilities, and the Recreation and Parks Department, respectively. Additionally, the guidelines do not replace FAA and State notification requirements for construction in the vicinity of airports. Regulations regarding airports are managed by the FAA and Ohio Department of Transportation.

Residential Design Guidelines

General Residential Design Guidelines

1. The appropriateness of infill development should be measured in terms of height, width, setbacks, and lot coverage. Projects that are proposed at a density higher than the recommended land use may be supported if they include a high level of site and architectural design.
2. Sensitive site design, cluster development and other design approaches should be used to preserve open space, natural resources, and other ecologically sensitive areas.
3. Building materials should be of high quality and durability, such as traditional masonry, stone, stucco, wood, etc.
4. Front facades should be designed to provide aesthetic appeal through the appropriate use and placement of doors and windows.
5. Development adjacent to parkland should be oriented in such a way that it faces the park (houses should not back up to parkland).
6. Lights should have fully shielded, recessed lamps directed downward to prevent glare and shine above the horizontal plane.
7. Building owners/developers are encouraged to conserve and rehabilitate historic buildings and architectural elements and to consult the Historic Preservation Office regarding best practices in maintaining and rehabilitating historic structures.

Single and Two Unit

1. New single and two-unit housing should be oriented to the street and reflect the prevailing setback and spacing of nearby homes, as appropriate.
2. The design and character of new development, including homes, additions, and garages, should be appropriate and based on the principal and nearby structures in terms of height, width, setbacks, lot coverage, roof pitch, other.
3. Garages should be located and accessed from the rear of the property for those sites with alley access.
4. Accessory buildings (including, but not limited to, detached garages) should be located to the rear of the principal building.
5. Front porches are encouraged.
6. Attached garages facing front elevations should not exceed 40 percent of the home's width (including the garage) and be set back at least two feet from the front elevation. In situations where it is not feasible to set back the garage from the front elevation, a functional front porch of at least 100 square feet should extend beyond the face of the garage. Additionally, side facing garages should provide windows on the front elevation of the home. Single bay garage doors and/or garage doors with windows are preferred.



Multiunit

1. The primary facade on the ground level of multiunit buildings should include entrances, stoops, porches, balconies or other features to contribute to street activity.
2. Multiunit buildings should incorporate building articulation through the use of bays, balconies, cornice lines, and varying rooflines.
3. Multiunit development should incorporate plazas and courtyards which are open to and visible from the primary street.
4. Variation in building design is encouraged for multiunit developments with multiple buildings.
5. Building height transitions should be used to create a scale and massing that is appropriate based on the surrounding uses.
6. Setbacks of higher stories from the front facade should be considered for taller buildings to lessen their visual impact.
7. Multiunit development should include usable open space as described in the Open Space guidelines. Neither required setbacks nor stormwater detention basins substitute for recommended open space.
8. Multiunit development should face public streets and open space. Parking lots should be placed behind or, if necessary, next to buildings.
9. In urban areas, roof pitches should be appropriate based on nearby contributing building's roof pitch.

Open Space

1. Open space should be integrated into new development, serving in one or more of the following ways: an organizational element, a central green space, connection to adjacent open space, protection of natural areas, and/or as a buffer along scenic roadways.
2. Open space should include landscaping, trees and connections to sidewalks or trails as appropriate. The design and placement of landscaping should consider the type of open space, its relationship to the built environment and the best use of the space.
3. Usable open space should be incorporated along bodies of water (streams, rivers, etc.) for active or passive recreational use. When appropriate, opportunities to connect to the regional trail system should be pursued (see also Natural Resource section).
4. Development proposals should clearly delineate areas set aside for stormwater management.
5. Neither required stormwater detention basins nor setbacks substitute for recommended open space.
6. Development should address open space—buildings should front parks and open space.



Parking

1. Requests for parking reductions, including those beyond that provided by applicable overlay provisions, will be considered based on:
 - a. the presence of on-street parking,
 - b. mixed use development pattern of surrounding area,
 - c. pedestrian accessibility,
 - d. access to transit,
 - e. extent of variance requested,
 - f. size and nature of use,
 - g. potential impact on adjacent residential uses, and
 - h. provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities beyond that required by code.
2. Shared parking arrangements are encouraged, particularly between land uses with differing peak hours.
3. The use of green technologies to manage stormwater runoff in parking lots, subject to city engineering requirements, is encouraged. Examples include rain gardens, bio-swales and pervious pavement.
4. Bicycle parking should be incorporated into development projects as required by code. Additional consideration should also be given to including supporting facilities in multiunit, office and mixed use developments.
5. Structured parking, designed to minimize visual impacts and buffered from adjacent residential, should be considered for high density residential, mixed use, office, or institutional projects.
6. Parking structures should not front primary corridors, but should instead be placed at the rear of development.
7. Parking lots should be hidden to the greatest extent possible by locating it to the rear or side of a building.



Connectivity

1. Development should connect to the public sidewalk, bikeway network, adjacent parks, and multi-use trail network. Within a given site, an interconnected series of streets, sidewalks, and paths should be provided.
2. Connectivity within and among developments to parks and open space should be a design priority.
3. Connectivity between developments via public streets is encouraged. In the case connectivity via public streets is not feasible, pedestrian connections should be considered.
4. Traditional suburban curvilinear block and street design should be avoided unless it facilitates preservation of natural features.
5. Maintenance of existing street and alley grids is encouraged. Evaluation of potential disposal of right-of-way (ROW) should consider whether the subject ROW is improved and the degree to which it provides connectivity not otherwise available.

Landscaping, Buffering and Screening

1. Landscape installations should enhance buildings, create and define public and private spaces, and provide shade, aesthetic appeal, and environmental benefits.
2. Buffering of adjacent uses, particularly lower density residential, should use elements such as existing and new vegetation, fencing, masonry walls, mounding, orientation of residential garages, and placement of site lighting such that it avoids spillage into adjacent sites.
3. Landscaping should be used to support storm water management goals for filtration, percolation, and erosion control consistent with the Department of Public Utilities Stormwater Manual.
4. Plant species should be adapted to urban conditions. Native species are encouraged and invasive species should be avoided.
5. Existing landscaping should be preserved and integrated into site design where feasible (see also Natural Resources section).
6. Screening should be provided between residential and non-residential uses.
7. Service and loading zones should be located to the rear, side, or in an internal location to reduce visibility and noise and should be screened appropriately.
8. Parking lots should be screened from view from public right-of-way and adjacent development. Screening should include a combination of the following items: walls, mounds, trees, shrubs, and/or landscaping.
9. Chain link fencing is not appropriate for screening.
10. Street trees should be provided as part of new development, with guidance from the Recreation and Parks Department.

Natural Resources

1. Development should be appropriately sited to conserve natural features as integral components of development or as part of public or private park and recreation systems.
2. Protected natural areas should be clearly delineated from development to prevent encroachment, particularly in the case of single-unit homes (e.g. split-rail fencing and bollards).
3. Usable open space should be incorporated along bodies of water (streams, rivers, etc.) for active or passive recreational use. When appropriate, opportunities to connect to the regional trail system should be pursued (see also Open Space section).
4. Stream corridors, wetlands, ravines and the 100-year floodplain should be protected in a natural state (more specific methodology is found in the Department of Public Utilities Stormwater Manual).
5. Mature trees provide significant environmental benefits and should be preserved whenever possible. Tree preservation measures should be density neutral.
6. Alternative “green” methods to manage stormwater should be considered (i.e. bio-swales, vegetated swales, native landscaping, naturalized detention and retention basins, pervious surfaces), consistent with Department of Public Utilities Stormwater Manual.

Public and Private Art

1. Art placed on city property or within public right-of-way must be approved by and meet the evaluation criteria of the Columbus Art Commission, as provided in City Code.
2. Existing art incorporated into structures should be conserved where feasible.
3. Integration of art in larger development projects is encouraged, as is placement of art in public spaces, such as plazas.
4. Works of art should be designed with consideration to maintenance and durability.

Commercial Design Guidelines

General Commercial Design Guidelines

1. Buildings should be generally parallel to and facing the street, with an entrance door(s) connected to the public sidewalk.
2. A consistent level of detailing and finish should be provided for all sides of a building, allowing for service areas.
3. Building materials should be of high quality and durability, such as traditional masonry, stone, stucco, cedar, etc.
4. Buildings should be articulated by dividing façades into modules or bays, use of piers and columns, recessed and projecting bays, varying rooflines and building setback above cornice line as appropriate.
5. Drive-through pickup windows and coverings should be located to the rear or side of the principal building.
6. Awnings and associated framing systems should be compatible with building design.
7. For multistory buildings, ground floor uses should address and contribute to the street. This can be accomplished through such design elements as door entries, windows, and landscaping.
8. Building owners/developers are encouraged to conserve and rehabilitate historic buildings and architectural elements and to consult the Historic Preservation Office regarding best practices in maintaining and rehabilitating historic structures.

Facades

1. Street level facades adjacent to a public sidewalk should be as transparent as possible to create an interesting pedestrian environment, except for residential spaces on ground floors.
2. Street level facades should incorporate a high level of design and material quality.
3. Blank walls should not be presented to primary streets. Buildings with blank walls (without doors or windows) adjacent to side streets and residential areas should use building articulation and landscaping to mitigate impacts on adjacent uses.
4. Design elements should be used to distinguish between street level and upper story windows.

Setbacks

1. Buildings in urban areas should generally have a zero foot setback. Consideration of larger setbacks should be based on the incorporation of public spaces, placement of adjacent buildings, and/or unique geometry.
2. Consideration should be given to allow reduced setbacks for commercial buildings in suburban areas when parking and circulation are placed behind the principal structure (see also Parking section).

Height

1. Requests for a variance in height will be considered based on:
 - a. Site size and situation
 - b. Adjacent uses
 - c. Quality of architectural design and materials
 - d. Parking provision
2. Building height transitions should be used to create scale and massing that is appropriate relative to surrounding uses.
3. The use of a setback from the front, rear and/or side façade(s), or other design strategies, should be used to lessen the visual impact of taller buildings.

Open Space

1. Open space should be integrated into new development, serving in one or more of the following ways: an organizational element, a central green space, connection to adjacent open space, protection of natural areas, and/or as a buffer along scenic roadways.
2. Open space should include landscaping, trees and connections to sidewalks or trails as appropriate. The design and placement of landscaping should consider the type of open space, its relationship to the built environment and the best use of the space.
3. Usable open space should be incorporated along bodies of water (streams, rivers, etc.) for active or passive recreational use. When appropriate, opportunities to connect to the regional trail system should be pursued (see also Natural Resource section).
4. Development proposals should clearly delineate areas set aside for stormwater management.
5. Neither required stormwater detention basins nor setbacks substitute for recommended open space.
6. Development should address open space—buildings should front parks and open space.

Parking

1. Requests for parking reductions, including those beyond that provided by applicable overlay provisions, will be considered based on:
 - a. the presence of on-street parking,
 - b. mixed use development pattern of surrounding area,
 - c. pedestrian accessibility,
 - d. access to transit,
 - e. extent of variance requested,
 - f. size and nature of use,
 - g. potential impact on adjacent residential uses, and
 - h. provision of pedestrian and bicycle facilities beyond that required by code.
2. Shared parking arrangements are encouraged, particularly between land uses with differing peak hours.
3. The use of green technologies to manage stormwater runoff in parking lots, subject to city engineering requirements, is encouraged. Examples include rain gardens, bio-swales and pervious pavement.
4. Bicycle parking should be incorporated into development projects as required by code. Additional consideration should also be given to including supporting facilities in multiunit, office and mixed use developments.
5. Structured parking, designed to minimize visual impacts and buffered from adjacent residential, should be considered for high density residential, mixed use, office, or institutional projects.
6. Parking structures should not front primary corridors, but should instead be placed at the rear of development.
7. Parking lots should be placed to the rear or side of a building and be hidden from view to the greatest extent possible. In situations where a parking lot is proposed in front of a building, the following should be considered:
 - a. Larger shopping centers may incorporate outlot development designed in such a way as to screen parking areas. No parking or circulation aisles should be located between outlot development(s) and the right-of-way.
 - b. Smaller suburban shopping centers (i.e. strip centers) should be limited to no more than two rows of parking plus drive aisle between the building and right-of-way.
8. A high level of landscaping and screening should be provided between the right-of-way and parking lot. (see also Landscaping, Buffering and Screening)
9. Large commercial parking lots should include a network of pedestrian walkways to provide access to the building (s) and adjacent sidewalk(s).

Connectivity

1. Development should connect to the public sidewalk, bikeway network, adjacent parks, and multi-use trail network. Within a given site, an interconnected series of streets, sidewalks, and paths should be provided.
2. Connectivity within and among developments to parks and open space should be a design priority.
3. Connectivity between developments via public streets is encouraged. In the case connectivity via public streets is not feasible, pedestrian connections should be established.
4. Traditional suburban curvilinear block and street design should be avoided unless it facilitates preservation of natural features.
5. Maintenance of existing street and alley grids is encouraged. Evaluation of potential disposal of right-of-way (ROW) should consider whether the subject ROW is improved and the degree to which it provides connectivity not otherwise available.

Landscaping, Buffering and Screening

1. Landscape installations should enhance buildings, create and define public and private spaces, and provide shade, aesthetic appeal, and environmental benefits.
2. Buffering of adjacent uses, particularly lower density residential, should use elements such as existing and new vegetation, fencing, masonry walls, mounding, orientation of residential garages, and placement of site lighting such that it avoids spillage into adjacent sites.
3. Landscaping should be used to support storm water management goals for filtration, percolation and erosion control consistent with the Department of Public Utilities Stormwater Manual.
4. Plant species should be adapted to urban conditions. Native species are encouraged and Invasive species should be avoided.
5. Existing landscaping should be preserved and integrated into site design where feasible (see also Natural Resources section).
6. Screening should be provided between residential and non-residential uses.
7. Service and loading zones should be located to the rear, side, or in an internal location to reduce visibility and noise and should be screened appropriately.
8. Parking lots should be screened from view from public right-of-way and adjacent development. Screening should include a combination of the following items: walls, mounds, trees, shrubs, and/or landscaping.
9. Chain link fencing is not appropriate for screening.
10. Street trees should be provided as part of new development, with guidance from the Recreation and Parks Department.

Natural Resources

1. Development should be appropriately sited to conserve natural features as integral components of development or as part of public or private park and recreation systems.
2. Protected natural areas should be clearly delineated from development to prevent encroachment.
3. Usable open space should be incorporated along bodies of water (streams, rivers, etc.) for active or passive recreational use. When appropriate, opportunities to connect to the regional trail system should be pursued (see also Open Space section).
4. Stream corridors, wetlands, ravines and the 100-year floodplain should be protected in a natural state (more specific methodology is found in the Department of Public Utilities Stormwater Manual).
5. Mature trees provide significant environmental benefits and should be preserved whenever possible. Tree preservation measures should be density neutral.
6. Alternative “green” methods to manage stormwater should be considered (i.e. bio-swales, vegetated swales, native landscaping, naturalized detention and retention basins, pervious surfaces), consistent with Department of Public Utilities Stormwater Manual.

Public and Private Art

1. Art placed on city property or within public right-of-way must be approved by and meet the evaluation criteria of the Columbus Art Commission, as provided in City Code.
2. Existing art incorporated into structures should be conserved where feasible.
3. Integration of art in larger development projects is encouraged, as is placement of art in public spaces, such as plazas.
4. Works of art should be designed with consideration to maintenance and durability.

Graphics

1. In urban areas, blade signs are recommended.
2. In suburban areas, monument style signs are recommended and should not be taller than six feet.
3. Wall signs should not obscure or interfere with architectural lines and details and should be sized to fit in with the building's facade design.
4. New signage should be designed to be a logical and complementary component of the overall design of a storefront.
5. Buildings should not be dominated by graphics. Crowded or cluttered graphics arrangements should be avoided.
6. Signs for storefronts/businesses in the same building/development should be of coordinated design—reinforcing rather than competing with each other.
7. Large commercial developments should utilize integrated signage, with an emphasis on wall signs and central identification signage for the entire development, rather than multiple freestanding signs.
8. Excessively large signs are discouraged.
9. Some types of signs are generally discouraged (or otherwise prohibited in city code), including ad murals, off-premises signs, billboards, signs with flashing lights or bare bulbs, co-op signs, rotating signs, pole signs, automatic changeable copy signs, bench signs, and roof-mounted signs.



4 – Land Use Policies

Introduction - Land Use Policies

The C2P2 Land Use Policies are text designed to correspond with an area's Recommended Land Use Map (within a C2P2 Land Use Plan) and provide flexible guidance on key land use issues and scenarios. The policies and map work together to form recommendations regarding future land use. Development proposals are reviewed for consistency with Columbus Citywide Planning Policies, including the Design Guidelines, Land Use Policies, and Land Use Plan (See also *About C2P2*, p. 4-7).

General Land Use Policies

The general land use policies apply to multiple land use classifications and are used to review development proposals when applicable. It is important to note that Columbus Citywide Planning Policies are adopted as city policy, not code. The policies do not replace the zoning code or apply to existing uses that are consistent with the zoning code or are legally nonconforming.

1. Development proposals that require a zoning change or variance are reviewed for consistency with Columbus Citywide Planning Policies, including the Design Guidelines, Land Use Policies, and Land Use Plan (See also *About C2P2*, p. 4-7). Land use and design are both integral components of development proposals, and site plans and related information should be provided to review for consistency with C2P2.
2. Recommended density ranges are guidelines for future development which work in conjunction with the C2P2 Design Guidelines.
3. Density ranges do not guarantee that development proposals will be approved at the maximum density. Additionally, consideration may be given to densities higher than the recommendation for projects that include a high level of site and architectural design and/or access to enhanced transit.
4. Density is typically measured in terms of dwelling units per acre (*i.e.* "Gross Density"). The calculation includes the area of the entire site including internal roads and open space.
5. Density calculations allow for clustering of units on a smaller portion of the developable site to accommodate natural resource preservation and larger open space designations.
6. Recommendations of this plan do not apply to properties outside Columbus. Land use recommendations for areas that are currently not in Columbus are provided in the event they are annexed to the City in the future.
7. Requests for homebased daycare within residential areas should be reviewed per State of Ohio standards. Columbus Planning does not consider requests for homebased daycare in residential areas to be a change of use, and therefore does not comment on such requests.

Very Low Density Residential, <4 du/acre

Very low density residential development is predominantly comprised of single-unit homes at a density of less than 4 du/acre. This classification applies to the least intense residential portions of an area and includes existing low density residential neighborhoods, single-unit homes on large lots, and areas of undeveloped land. It is recognized that undeveloped land and existing homes on large lots, particularly those that are located along primary corridors, may be subject to development proposals inconsistent with the land use recommendation in terms of use and/or density. Alternative proposed uses and/or higher density proposals may merit support if they are consistent with the Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) Guiding Principles. Principles that may apply include: enhancing established neighborhoods with high quality and appropriate infill development, revitalizing Columbus' older neighborhoods through infill development, and utilizing existing infrastructure. Refer to the C2P2 Guiding Principles for more information (pages 12-14).

In situations where a proposed use is inconsistent with the Very Low Density Residential recommendation, the following should be considered:

1. Densities higher than the recommended land use may be appropriate in instances where more intense uses are present, such as higher density residential, manufacturing, or commercial, or when site design mitigates impacts on adjacent residential uses and significant natural resource preservation is provided.
2. In situations where higher densities may be appropriate, the proposed net density (not including regulated floodway, floodplain or stream corridor protection zones) will be reviewed for compatibility with adjacent uses, potential impact on natural resources, and other factors.
3. New uses could include office, residential, institutional, recreation, and/or open space, depending on the scale and intensity relative to surrounding uses.
4. Proposals should follow the C2P2 Design Guidelines for the proposed use.

Low Density Residential, 4–6 du/acre

This classification is similar to the Very Low Density Residential classification and includes single-unit homes and limited amounts of multiunit housing developed at a density of 4–6 du/acre. Proposals should follow the Residential Design Guidelines.

Low-Medium Density Residential, 6–10 du/acre

Low-Medium Density Residential is characterized by smaller lot, single-unit homes, doubles, townhouses, and smaller scale multiunit housing developed at a density of 6–10 du/acre. Proposals should follow the Residential Design Guidelines.

Medium Density Residential, 10–16 du/acre

This classification is similar to the Low-Medium Density Residential classification, but with somewhat higher densities. It is characterized by smaller lot, single-unit homes, doubles, townhouses, and smaller scale multiunit housing developed at a density of 10–16 du/acre. Proposals should follow the Residential Design Guidelines.

Medium -High Density Residential, 16–24 du/acre

Medium-High Density Residential is characterized by multi-story, multiunit housing developed at a density of 16–24 du/acre. Higher density residential development in primary corridors and commercial districts support neighborhood retail by creating a strong local market, and facilitating a walkable, transit supportive environment. The Mixed Use 1, 2 and 3 land use classifications also support residential densities in this range. Proposals should follow the Residential Design Guidelines.

High Density Residential, 24-45 du/acre

This classification is similar to the Medium-High Density Residential, but with somewhat higher density. It is characterized by multi-story, multiunit housing developed at a density of 24–45 du/acre. Higher density residential development in primary corridors and commercial districts support neighborhood retail by creating a strong local market, and facilitating a walkable, transit supportive environment. The Mixed Use 2 and 3 land use classifications also support residential densities in this range. Proposals should follow the Residential Design Guidelines.

Very High Density Residential, >45 du/acre

The Very High Density Residential is characterized by multi-story, multiunit housing developed at a density of 45 du/acre or greater. Higher density residential development in primary corridors and commercial districts support neighborhood retail by creating a strong local market, and facilitating a walkable, transit supportive environment. The Mixed Use 3 land use classification also supports residential densities in this range. Proposals should follow the Residential Design Guidelines

Mixed Use 1, <24 du/acre

This classification supports a mix of land uses, including commercial (retail, office, hotel), institutional, and/or multiunit residential. Development may include a mix of uses on one site (for example, residential units located either above or next to the commercial uses) or only one use per site. Mixed Use 1 areas generally represent the smaller shopping corridors and neighborhood commercial hubs. These areas, in consideration of nearby residential areas, are appropriate for a mix of uses including residential densities less than 24 du per acre. Within areas designated Mixed Use 1, the following applies:

1. The designation does not require a mix of uses, but instead promotes mixed use development where it is a viable development scenario.
2. Mixed use development should support a variety of mobility options including walking, biking and transit (see also Connectivity section).
3. While commercial auto oriented uses are included in the Mixed Use 1 classification, proposals for an auto oriented use will be reviewed for potential negative impacts on surrounding development and the neighborhood. Examples of auto oriented uses include gas stations, auto sales, auto service, car washes, etc. In situations where a commercial auto oriented use is proposed, the following should be considered:
 - a. The appropriateness of the site for an auto oriented use, including the number of similar uses in a neighborhood and future development opportunities. In situations where a saturation of auto oriented uses exist within an area, new auto oriented uses are generally not supported.
 - b. In areas where a commercial overlay exists, proposals should meet overlay standards.
 - a. New development should include a high level of site and architectural design to mitigate impacts on existing and future development.
4. Proposals should follow the Residential and/or Commercial Design Guidelines, as appropriate.

Mixed Use 2, <45 du/acre

This classification is similar to the Mixed Use 1 classification, but supports residential densities less than 45 du/acre. This classification supports a mix of land uses, including commercial (retail, office, hotel), institutional, and/or multiunit residential. Development may include a mix of uses on one site (for example, residential units located either above or next to commercial uses) or only one use per site. Mixed Use 2 areas are the commercial hubs and corridors of the area, as well as existing large shopping centers. Within areas designated Mixed Use 2, the following applies:

1. The designation does not require a mix of uses, but instead promotes mixed use development where it is a viable development scenario.
2. Mixed use development should support a variety of mobility options including walking, biking and transit (see also Connectivity section).
3. While commercial auto oriented uses are included in the Mixed Use 2 classification, proposals for an auto oriented use will be reviewed for potential negative impacts on surrounding development and the neighborhood. Examples of auto oriented uses include gas stations, auto sales, auto service, car washes, etc. In situations where a commercial auto oriented use is proposed, the following should be considered:
 - a. The appropriateness of the site for an auto oriented use, including the number of similar uses in a neighborhood and future development opportunities. In situations where a saturation of auto oriented uses exist within an area, new auto oriented uses are generally not supported.
 - b. In areas where a commercial overlay exists, proposals should meet overlay standards.
 - b. New development should include a high level of site and architectural design to mitigate impacts on existing and future development.
4. Proposals should follow the Residential and/or Commercial Design Guidelines, as appropriate.

Mixed Use 3, >45 du/acre

This classification is the most intense use in the planning area. It is similar to the Mixed Use 1 and 2 classifications, but supports residential densities greater than 45 du/acre. This classification supports a mix of land uses, including commercial (retail, office, hotel), institutional, and/or multiunit residential. Development may include a mix of uses on one site (for example, residential units located either above or next to commercial uses) or only one use per site. Mixed Use 3 areas are the commercial hubs and corridors of the area, as well as existing large shopping centers. Within areas designated Mixed Use 3, the following applies:

1. The designation does not require a mix of uses, but instead promotes mixed use development where it is a viable development scenario.
2. Mixed use development should support a variety of mobility options including walking, biking and transit (see also Connectivity section).
3. While commercial auto oriented uses are included in the Mixed Use 3 classification, proposals for an auto oriented use will be reviewed for potential negative impacts on surrounding development and the neighborhood. Examples of auto oriented uses include gas stations, auto sales, auto service, car washes, etc. In situations where a commercial auto oriented use is proposed, the following should be considered:
 - a. The appropriateness of the site for an auto oriented use, including the number of similar uses in a neighborhood and future development opportunities. In situations where a saturation of auto oriented uses exist within an area, new auto oriented uses are generally not supported.
 - b. In areas where a commercial overlay exists, proposals should meet overlay standards.
 - c. New development should include a high level of site and architectural design to mitigate impacts on existing and future development.
4. Proposals should follow the Residential and/or Commercial Design Guidelines, as appropriate.

Commercial

The Commercial classification includes retail, office, or institutional uses. Fuel service stations are also supported in this classification. Within areas designated Commercial, the following applies:

1. Retail, services, and office uses are important components of neighborhoods and should be clustered where possible for increased viability.
2. Neighborhood plans do not distinguish between types of retail proposals within the commercial land use recommendation.
3. Proposals should follow the Commercial Design Guidelines.
4. Expansion of commercial developments beyond an alley into primarily residential districts is generally discouraged. Such expansion may be supported in limited circumstances. In situations where an expansion beyond an alley is proposed, the following should be considered:
 - a. The proposed principle use should be generally compatible with the adopted land use plan.
 - b. Proposals should comply with existing commercial overlays.
 - c. New development should be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts, including noise and light, on the adjacent uses, especially residential uses.
 - d. Buffering and landscaping should be provided to minimize impacts on the adjacent neighborhood.
 - e. Proposals should attempt to preserve the existing structure, if historic or contributing.
5. Existing “corner” store buildings located within residential areas offer benefits to the community. When reviewing zoning or variance requests for retail or office uses in these buildings, the following should be considered:
 - a. The proposed use is within an existing storefront.
 - b. New development should be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts, including noise and light, on the adjacent uses, especially residential uses.
 - c. Expansion of the building footprint of the retail or office use is discouraged.
 - d. Residential uses in existing units above the storefront and/or conversion of the storefront space to a residential use may also be considered, provided the proposed residential use is consistent with the plan's density and other recommendations.

Office

The Office classification includes traditional and medical office uses. Within areas designated Office, the following applies:

1. Office uses are important centers of employment in the city, and the maintenance of office uses is a priority for the City of Columbus.
2. Proposals should follow the Commercial Design Guidelines.
3. Proposals for alternative uses in areas designated for office are generally not supported. In situations where a proposed development is inconsistent with the Office land use recommendation, the following should be considered:
 - a. The site is part of a larger development trend in the vicinity, or is otherwise isolated.
 - b. New uses could include residential, institutional, recreation, and/or open space. Retail uses are generally discouraged in existing office locations.
 - c. Proposals should follow the C2P2 Design Guidelines for the proposed use.

Employment Center

The Employment Center classification is reserved for sites primarily dedicated to employment, including office uses. This classification may also include industrial and warehouse uses when appropriate. Within areas designated Employment Center, the following applies:

1. Considerations for industrial and warehouse uses will be based on adjacent uses and additional site factors.
2. Generally, retail and residential uses are not supported in these areas.
3. Retail and hotel uses may be supported as a secondary use to the primary business.
4. Proposals should follow the Commercial Design Guidelines.

Institutional

The Institutional classification includes schools, libraries, government offices, places of worship and other institutional uses. Within areas designated Institutional, the following applies:

1. Proposals should follow the Residential and/or Commercial Design Guidelines, as appropriate.
2. Existing institutional sites may be subject to redevelopment. In situations where a proposed development is inconsistent with the Institutional land use recommendation, the following should be considered:
 - a. Pending support of the Recreation & Parks Department, opportunities for parkland should be explored.
 - b. A broad range of adaptive reuses may be appropriate for existing institutional uses and sites, but is largely dependent on the specific location and associated impacts on the surrounding neighborhood, natural resources and other factors.
 - c. New uses could include office, residential, recreation, and/or open space, depending on scale and intensity relative to surrounding uses.
 - d. New development should be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts on the adjacent uses, especially residential uses, through such means as landscaping, buffering and enhanced setbacks.
 - e. For new residential uses, the proposed net density (not including regulated floodway, floodplain or stream corridor protection zones) will be reviewed for compatibility with adjacent uses.
 - f. Retail and entertainment uses may be appropriate on commercial corridors, but are not appropriate in residential areas.

Industrial & Warehouse

The Industrial and Warehouse classification is characterized by industrial, manufacturing, and warehouse uses. Industrial uses play an important role in employment and the economic vitality of the city. Within areas designated Industrial and Warehouse, the following applies:

1. In general, industrial areas should be maintained and supported as job centers.
2. Industrial development should be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts on adjacent uses, especially residential uses, through such means as landscaping, buffering, enhanced setbacks and consideration of building height.
3. Loading, storage, and other external activities that generate noise and other impacts should not face public rights-of-way or residential or institutional uses. In the event that this is not possible, such areas should be fully screened.
4. Proposals should follow applicable Commercial Design Guidelines.

Recreation and Parks

The Recreation and Parks classification designates publicly owned facilities that provide recreation amenities not typically found within sites in the Open Space classification. The following considerations should be noted:

1. Recommendations for new parkland will be coordinated with the City's Recreation and Parks Department and will be based on the standards and priorities identified by Recreation and Parks staff. Area and neighborhood plans cannot recommend new parkland without the support of the Recreation and Parks Department.
2. Connectivity within and among developments to parks and open space should be a design priority.

Open Space

The Open Space classification refers to natural areas that do not provide recreational facilities and includes areas with development restrictions, such as cemeteries, regulated floodway, and conservation holdings. Open space areas could also be owned by the Recreation and Parks Department and developed with parks facilities in the future. Rights-of-way controlled by the city or other government bodies are not considered or designated Open Space. The Open Space classification is limited to the following scenarios:

1. City and other public agency owned property designated for such use;
2. Privately owned property for which development restrictions are in place, for example, a conservation easement or floodway; or
3. Acquisition is actively underway by a state or local agency, such as the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District.



Private Open Space

The Private Open Space classification is characterized by private golf courses and sports fields. It also includes dedicated open space within a development and open space owned by Home Owners Associations. Within areas designated Private Open Space, the following applies:

1. Existing private open space sites may be subject to redevelopment. In situations where a proposed development is inconsistent with the recommended land use, the following should be considered:
 - a. Pending support of the Recreation & Parks Department, opportunities for parkland should be explored.
 - b. A broad range of adaptive reuses may be appropriate for existing private open space uses and sites, but is largely dependent on the specific location and associated impacts on the surrounding neighborhood, natural resources and other factors.
 - c. New uses could include office, residential, institutional, recreation, and/or open space, depending on scale and intensity relative to surrounding uses.
 - d. New development should be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts on the adjacent uses, especially residential uses, through such means as landscaping, buffering and enhanced setbacks.
 - e. For new residential uses, the proposed net density (not including regulated floodway, floodplain or stream corridor protection zones) will be reviewed for compatibility with adjacent uses.
 - f. Retail and entertainment uses may be appropriate on commercial corridors, but not in residential neighborhoods.
 - g. Proposals should follow the C2P2 Design Guidelines for the proposed use.

Agriculture

The Agriculture classification is characterized by urban and rural food production sites. Within areas designated Agriculture, the following applies:

1. Existing agricultural sites may be subject to redevelopment. In situations where a proposed development is inconsistent with the Agriculture land use recommendation, the following should be considered:
 - a. Pending support of the Recreation & Parks Department, opportunities for parkland should be explored.
 - b. A broad range of adaptive reuses may be appropriate for existing agricultural uses and sites, but is largely dependent on the specific location and associated impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.
 - c. New uses could include office, residential, institutional, recreation, and/or open space, depending on scale and intensity relative to surrounding uses. Careful attention should be given to impacts on adjacent properties and residences.
 - d. New development should be designed to minimize or mitigate impacts on the adjacent uses, especially residential uses, through such means as landscaping, buffering and enhanced setbacks.
 - e. For new residential uses, the proposed net density (not including regulated floodway, floodplain or stream corridor protection zones) will be reviewed for compatibility with adjacent uses.
 - f. Retail and entertainment uses may be appropriate on commercial corridors, but not in residential neighborhoods.
 - g. Proposals should follow the C2P2 Design Guidelines for the proposed use.



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